

MAY 15 1961

STATINTL

X UPI-60

(POWERS)

CPYRGHT

POUND, VA.--IMPRISONED U-2 PILOT FRANCIS POWERS HAS EMPHATICALLY
DENIED SPECULATION HE WOULD REMAIN IN RUSSIA AFTER COMPLETION OF
HIS 10-YEAR ESPIONAGE SENTENCE.

IN A RECENT LETTER TO HIS PARENTS, MR. AND MRS. OLIVER POWERS,
HE WROTE, "I DO NOT INTEND TO STAY IN THE SOVIET UNION WHEN I AM
RELEASED.

"I HAVE NEVER SAID TO ANYONE THAT I INTENDED TO DO SO," HE
TOLD HIS PARENTS IN THE LETTER WHICH THEY RELEASED YESTERDAY.

A PUBLISHED ACCOUNT LAST MONTH BY A LONDON NEWSPAPER (THE DAILY
MAIL) SAID THE FORMER U. S. AIR FORCE PILOT CONVICTED LAST SUMMER OF
MAKING HIGH ALTITUDE FLIGHTS OVER RUSSIA, WOULD STAY IN THE SOVIET
UNION WHEN HE GAINED HIS FREEDOM.

THE STORY ALSO SAID POWERS' WIFE, MRS. BARBARA POWERS OF
MILLEDGEVILLE, GA., WOULD JOIN HIM THERE.

BUT FRANCIS ASSURED HIS PARENTS THAT "I WILL RETURN HOME, WHERE
I BELONG AND WANT TO BE, AS SOON AS I AM RELEASED. REMAINING HERE HAS
NEVER ENTERED MY MIND."

HIS MOTHER, IN ILL HEALTH FOR SEVERAL MONTHS AND JUST DISCHARGED
FROM A HOSPITAL FRIDAY, TOLD UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL "I HAD ALWAYS
FELT HE WOULDN'T DELIBERATELY STAY OVER THERE OF HIS OWN FREE WILL."

HIS FATHER, A SHOE REPAIRMAN IN NEARBY NORTON, SAID HE "KNEW ALL
ALONG THAT IT (THE STORY) WAS ALL RUMORS AND MADE UP."

FRANCIS WROTE HE WAS "PROUD TO BE" A U. S. CITIZEN, ADDING "I
MIGHT NOT LIKE ALL THE POLICIES OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, BUT I FEEL
SURE THERE ARE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN THE STATES WHO DISAGREE WITH
THEM ALSO."

"I WAS BORN AN AMERICAN AND I INTEND TO DIE AN AMERICAN,"
POWERS WROTE.

5/15--TS1113AED

CPYRGHT